

The Honorable James Marleau
Chair, Senate Committee on Health Policy
Michigan Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909

April 25, 2014

Re: Senate Bill 879

Dear Sirs:

As a radiologist who spends the majority of her professional career interpreting mammograms, I would like to comment on the importance of mammographic breast density. The significance is twofold. Firstly, the greater the glandular breast density on the mammogram, the less likely any abnormality can be detected. Abnormalities such as cancer are hidden by the overlying gland tissue and therefore, not visualized until they attain a large size.

Secondly, since cancers develop from abnormal breast tissue cells, women with a greater percentage of gland tissue have a greater risk of developing breast cancer. Women will not know their mammographic breast density unless somebody makes them aware of it. This is the role of the mammographer. Therefore, this data must be communicated to the patient by means of the mammogram report and her primary care physician.

Respectfully,

Jeanne K. Hicks, M.D.
(Electronic Signature)

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